



## Early Journal Content on JSTOR, Free to Anyone in the World

This article is one of nearly 500,000 scholarly works digitized and made freely available to everyone in the world by JSTOR.

Known as the Early Journal Content, this set of works include research articles, news, letters, and other writings published in more than 200 of the oldest leading academic journals. The works date from the mid-seventeenth to the early twentieth centuries.

We encourage people to read and share the Early Journal Content openly and to tell others that this resource exists. People may post this content online or redistribute in any way for non-commercial purposes.

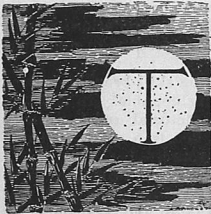
Read more about Early Journal Content at <http://about.jstor.org/participate-jstor/individuals/early-journal-content>.

JSTOR is a digital library of academic journals, books, and primary source objects. JSTOR helps people discover, use, and build upon a wide range of content through a powerful research and teaching platform, and preserves this content for future generations. JSTOR is part of ITHAKA, a not-for-profit organization that also includes Ithaka S+R and Portico. For more information about JSTOR, please contact [support@jstor.org](mailto:support@jstor.org).

# THE DECORATOR AND FURNISHER.

## DRY GOODS STORES AS FURNISHING EMPORIUMS.

BY JAMES CARRUTHERS.



THE leading dry goods firms in our large cities are purveyors of articles of house furnishing and decoration, and the public have the advantage of a wide range of comparison in articles of each class provided by good selection and skill, and are aided in their selection by the judgment and experience of those superintending the several departments.

Drapery designs for windows well merit attention in their establishments. Some exquisite Oriental stuffs are to be seen. The festoon dra-

peries, now so popular, form a striking feature. One novelty for window consists in the longitudinal alternation of two different materials, one opaque, the other transparent. Some of the valances are of fringed swags with silk covered lattice. A brocade for curtains has a ground of gray, on which carnations

never elsewhere been executed, due mainly to the special vegetable dyes employed, they allow of the designs being surveyed as a whole, which is not the case with carpets. They are to be chosen less for their designs than the general effect of their colorings. Some of the large Turkish carpets lately imported have the peculiarity of a center design in Turkish characters—presumably passages from the Koran, these in bright colors, whilst the intervening and larger space between centers and borders, are in dark lustrous colors. Eastern carpets would generally look better with less profusion of ornament. The want of reticence so visible in this profusion is a mere child-like display with a correspondingly weak effect, and so failing of the highest results of art. Not a few of these carpets have plain centers in colors, such as deep blue, restful to the vision, and which are set off by richly manipulated borders. The patterns of American carpets shown in these stores have generally the merit of quiescent effect, saved, however, from tameness by variations of tints, subordination of colors to leading lines, and a freedom in floral distribution. Some of the lightest hues are characterized by extreme vivacity. Choice combinations of colors in designs, giving a pleasant sense of warmth and breadth, are purplish violet, bluish green and orange, turquoise blue, yellow and purple, violet and light rose color, deep blue and golden brown, chocolate and light blue, with deep red and gray and warm green. The mosque carpets shown are in accord with a

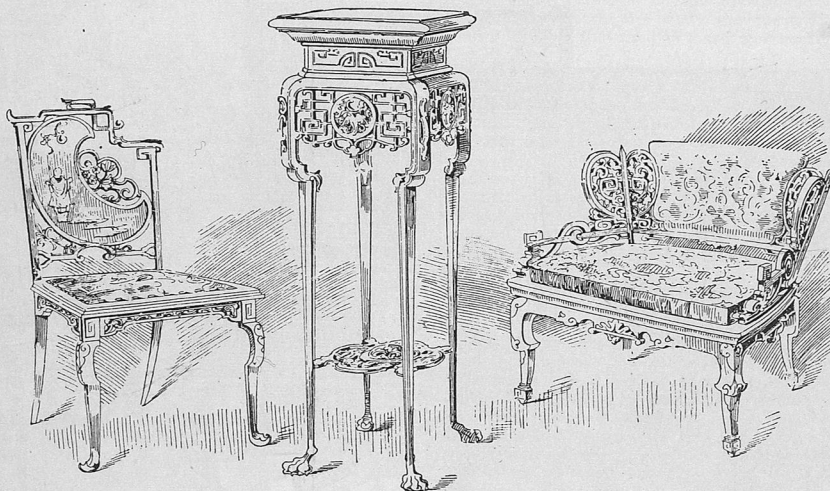


Fig. 4.

and roses are worked in gold. A tapestry *fleur-de-lis* brocade, adapted either to curtains or for covering furniture, has ground of blue green, the flower in a lighter shade edged with gold thread. Then there are beautiful lines of satin damask and brocatelles and silk for windows and portieres, displaying flowers and ferns in combination in delightful colorings. A Bengal satin, showing iridescent hues when slightly disturbed, is very beautiful. Among novelties for draping there is a crinkled silk formed from the cocoons of the wild silk-worm, in several choice colorings. Oriental table covers, enriched with minute ornamental forms, are well calculated to heighten the effect of a handsomely furnished room. The Turkish scarfs of many colors are admirably suited for display as disposed with a certain negligé air on various articles of furniture. For draping mirrors gauze silks appear in new art colors, some of them with outlined designs in gold and silver thread.

In the large collections of oriental floor rugs—of a great variety of patterns,—each weaving district in the east presenting its own special characteristics in designs, evidence is afforded of their increased appreciation. Looking to the scale on which dry goods houses have provided themselves with these attractive articles, it is seen that they long since anticipated the tendency of public taste in this direction to which, indeed, more elegant furnishings have led the way.

In addition to their grateful tread they also delight the eye, and whilst affording colors of hues and tints that have

prescribed arrangement. Each consists of two distinct designs on the upper transverse portion of which the priest stands, the worshipers taking their position on the lower parallelogram. Among the decided novelties are Turkish cushions for settees and sofas which present a rich appearance. The details of ornament are very minute.

Lightness of structure combined with requisite strength is in request in furniture. The very condition thus imposed would seem to stimulate novelty in design. The irregular but picturesque arrangement of shelves, primarily derived from Japanese artisans, is well carried out in cabinets and various receptacles. Dry goods men do not aspire to make a display of antique furniture, and in this they are wise. What they show in furniture has a certain air of American domesticity about it, and there is enough variety to suit all tastes. A large proportion of suites of furniture is in light woods, on which there has been a run for a length of time, as a reaction against dark hard woods. Light wood, too, is well fitted to display the light, airy French style of construction, and to show to advantage the delicate capricious carving, in the designing of which the French are such adepts. Light hues would seem to stimulate the inventive genius of designers, for its use has resulted in novel and most graceful forms. One of the latest novelties consists of hanging cupboards and cabinets combined, to be supported on brackets and attached to the wall, thus saving floor space. The newest designs are quite aerial, consisting simply of convolutions of

## THE DECORATOR AND FURNISHER.

rounded bent wood which support the shelves in their folds. They are enameled in white and gold.

Artistic taste is gratified by the exhibit of marquetry in the adornment of small tables, escrivoires and other articles. In the days of highest skill in the design and construction of furniture, marquetry came to the front, and its present revival is concurrent with improved taste in design.

Carving, as an art, is manifestly advancing. Broad carved frames of chairs are shown, including shell work and reclining figures, the contours being pleasingly irregular as following the relief forms.

Combination pieces of furniture attract not only by beautiful forms but their utility. Whilst the range of devices as to what shall be combined is all but exhausted there remains full scope for originality of design. Combination furniture has proved an invaluable contribution to the economy of space. Among other styles are those of Louis XIV., XV. and XVI., the taste for which received such an important impulse from the last Paris Exhibition, the types being modified in conformity with the requirements of American homes. Perhaps the most attractive are those in cabinet form, displaying articles of bric-a-brac and constituting the quintessence of illusions in this line. For filling the panels of screens we meet with Japanese diaphanous

vases of Benares, covered with a number of strange hand-wrought forms, having a rude primitive aspect. The roughened surface is such as might be induced by their being sprinkled with countless particles of the metal, round and jagged. The specimens shown as imported have a dull, lustrous look, but when polished and rubbed with a woollen cloth and emery powder, the surface assumes a luster like gold, its irregularities, besides, affording a fine play of delicate tints and shades. If the alloy could be ascertained and the skill in manipulation secured, the material could be turned to admirable account in numerous ornamental articles.

The essential beauty of brass, and the skill brought to bear on its manipulation, renders it highly fashionable. In addition to garlands in this metal, much fine pictorial relief work is shown. Thus a panel at the head of a bed is a symbolical representation of sleep drawn from classic sources.

A very attractive feature to be met with in several of these establishments consists of hanging lamps with stem and leaf work ranged round the borders of the lamp and suspended by delicate chains, also in wrought iron, having twined plants, leaves, and delicate knobs of metal, ovals and other forms which reflect back the light with ever changing effect.

The brilliancy now imparted to cut glass has led to the re-

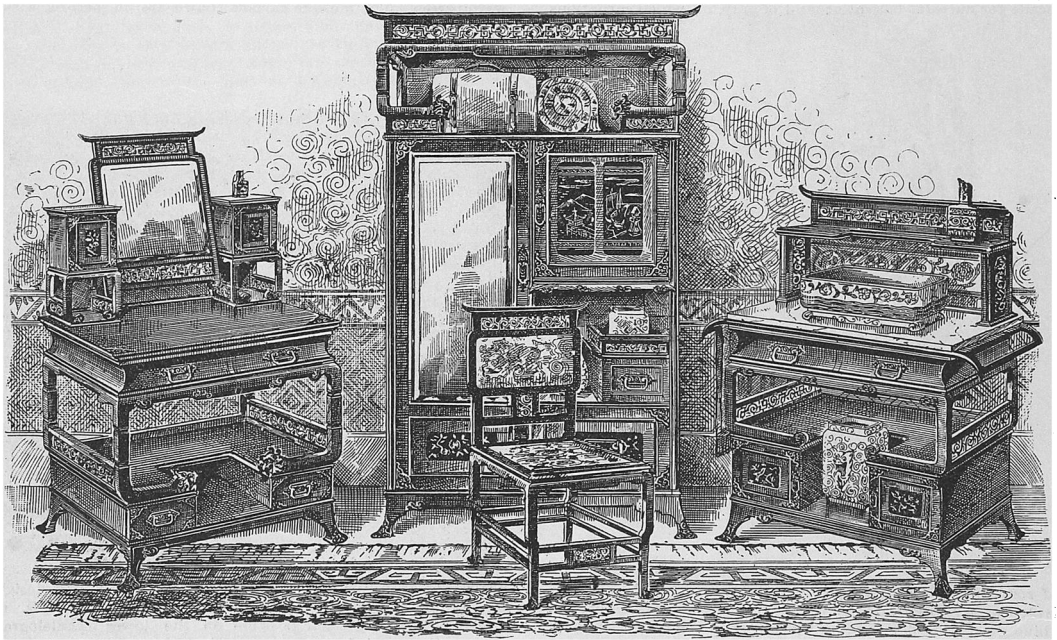


Fig. 5.

material, somewhat of a gauze-like aspect, bearing hand-painted designs, chiefly floral. For these are provided three-leaved bamboo screens, with copper rods at top, to which the panels are attached. There is a large variety of designs admitting changes in the screen.

The demand for silver ornamentation is assiduously met by the dry goods dealers, as shown in dinner and tea ware, frames of boxes and mirrors, borders of toilet tables, also for caskets, small clocks, and photograph and calendar frames. A table lamp with silver base and Mexican onyx stem has the oil globe shielded by a massive perforated shell of silver artistically fashioned. Deep dishes of sterling silver with wavy borders have flower sprigs represented on their base in gold and copper, the contrast being very effective.

Gilt brass ornamental articles, useful as well as beautiful, constitute an unvarying feature in the exhibits. They are mostly suitable for placing on mantels, console and boudoir tables. Many are enriched with pictorial views in enamel. For the full beauty, as respects hue in which brass can be presented, commend us to the brass handles, and long-necked

newal of glass candelabras designed to hold wax candles. Each is in one piece with the exception of the sockets, which are riveted with brass bands, the metal setting off the pristine hue of the material. The table cut glass articles are particularly fine, these including fanciful dishes, plain and in colors, some mounted on silver, which is particularly attractive in combination with red.

Extraordinary manipulative skill is exhibited in ceramic objects in porcelain, Worcester ware, bisque, antique Thuringian faience showing ivory effects and other composite fictile productions. Some examples of candelabras have cupids and other figures about their stems, the branches being enriched with delicate roses and leaves. The statuettes are marvellously fine in gesture and facial expression. Designers in ceramic ware would appear to revel in the ideal. We find such subjects as a bivouac of cupids, a sleeping nymph surrounded by satyrs, riotous cavaliers, etc.

Oval porcelain mirror frames are in many new designs, free from formal borders, and clustered with floral and figure decorations. In these the sections are differently ornamented,

## THE DECORATOR AND FURNISHER.

Cupid, for instance, lying in ambush in flowers on one side, whilst the other side bears butterflies sipping sweets. Even tinted draperies are represented. Many of the articles are wondrous examples of artistic ingenuity.

In bric-a-brac there has been an extensive importation of small Dresden china figures, remarkable for their rich colorings, set off with gilding and exhibiting all sorts of fancies, including

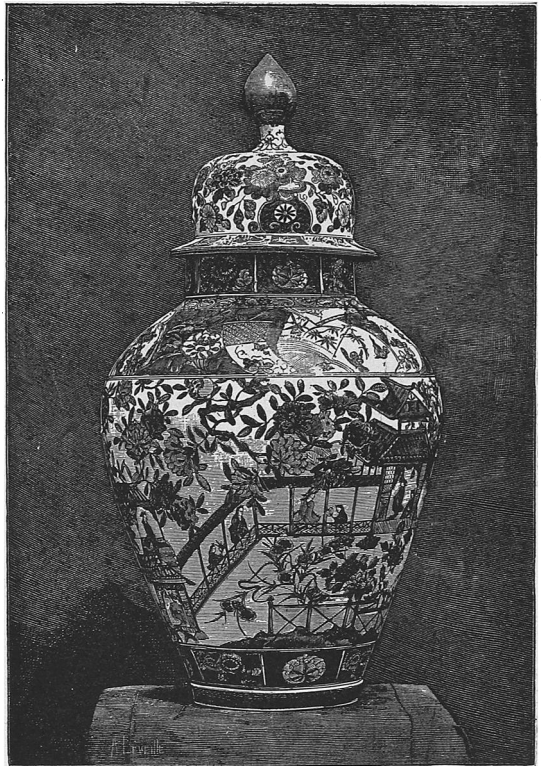


Chinese Porcelain.

barrows, pianos, footstools, and chairs, clocks and character figures. A number of these are intended to be grouped on shelves so as to give a glow of color to some particular portion of a room.

Among minor novelties are to be noted an umbrella stand having the upper rim or receptacle lined with projecting perforated rubber cushions, through each of which an umbrella may be forced, the cushions closing on them, and so preserving them in an upright position. A hall hat-stand has shelves on each side of central mirror, on which hats are placed, crown downwards, thus dispensing with projecting arms and the ever impending possibility of the headgear falling. Exceedingly beautiful ornaments are provided in wide mouthed sea shells, mounted on wire silver stands, displaying landscape and marine paintings on the inner enameled surface. Open-mouthed silk bags lined with satin and having hand-painted sprigs of flowers on the exterior surface are each supported by four short-gilded rods braced together, these rods being white enameled and gilded. Such bags are intended to be placed on the table, and are serviceable addendas to the work basket.

IN these days of varied materials and silks of wonderful dyes, besides flax, which is nearly as good, the clever woman can make for herself many of the adjuncts of a well-appointed home, and with aid only of her own facile fingers, can obtain a boudoir or drawing-room filled with dainty devices and draped with soft harmonious hangings. There are many fashions in furnishings, and many opportunities for the display of taste and discretion, but no one can be more trusted to more fully repay the time and labor entailed than a set of bedroom embroideries. It consists of window curtains and portieres, bedspread and canopy, besides table cover and bureau scarf. Each of these pieces is embroidered, and the same general effect runs through all the designs. The material may be anything suited to the purpose, and sets are shown in all grades from silk to cotton. The idea is to supply the apartment with an entire equipment of draperies, which shall perfectly harmonize one with the other. The set selected for description is made of old blue cotton sheeting, and is embroidered in linen floss. It is entirely inexpensive, and at the same time both the color and material are well suited to the purpose. The sheeting is wide, and each curtain can be made of a single length. A border of pond lilies is embroidered in the popular long and short stitch, and is separated from the body of the curtain by a couched line of heavy Japanese gold. The flowers are worked with floss of a deep cream color, and the leaves with a soft olive tone. The effect of the semi-solid work is particularly good, and the rich deep cream and olive tones are extremely handsome on the background of old blue. The lines which represent the water are couched with gold somewhat finer than that used to mark the borders, as are all the



Chinese Porcelain.

little wavy lines which cover the center of the curtain. The gold couching is very simple of execution, and it gives great brilliancy to the whole effect, yet it can be omitted and the center left plain, if the maker prefer.

THE DECORATOR AND FURNISHER costs only \$4 per year.